

board member for the National Council on Crime and Delinquency and is a member of the State of California AARP Livable Communities Committee.

Chief Swanger and his wife, Lora, have three children: Matt, Cameron, and Hayley. I am grateful for Chief Guy Swanger's dedicated service, and wish him great luck and joy in his retirement.

INTRODUCTION OF PROTECTING FEDERAL AGENCIES AND EMPLOYEES FROM POLITICAL INTERFERENCE ACT

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 1, 2019

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, today, I rise to introduce the Protecting Federal Agencies and Employees from Political Interference Act, which would require an act of Congress before any federal agency headquarters may be moved out of the National Capital Region (NCR). My bill would require that the headquarters of any agency located in the NCR on the date of the introduction of this bill remain in the NCR absent subsequent legislation. This bill is cosponsored by Representatives ANTHONY BROWN and JAMIE RASKIN.

The Trump administration has already begun moving agencies out of the NCR to the detriment of federal employees, their families and the work of these agencies. Employees who work in agency headquarters fulfill the indispensable role of keeping Congress and the president informed of agency activities. Congress cannot do its work to write laws and engage in vital oversight without the unvarnished facts that nonpartisan agencies provide. In fact, we have already seen the negative impacts of these relocation efforts. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has announced that it will be moving its headquarters staff to Grand Junction, Colorado, where agency staff will share office space with a Chevron corporate office, a state oil and gas association and an independent natural gas exploration company.

As for the Department of Agriculture's relocation efforts, two-thirds of impacted highly specialized employees will not relocate to Kansas City, retiring early or quitting instead. Preliminary reports suggest similarly low retention rates for BLM staffers asked to relocate west. While agency leadership touts these moves as cost effective, the work of the agency suffers when experienced personnel leave and relocation efforts appear to favor special interests.

Unless measures like the Protecting Federal Agencies and Employees from Political Interference Act are taken to stop agencies from relocating, the federal government will lose more employees and agencies will be unable to perform critical tasks, like assisting Congress in vital oversight.

I strongly urge my colleagues to support this bill.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. CLAY HIGGINS

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 1, 2019

Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, I was on official business in my district (LA-03). Had I been present, I would have voted yea on Roll Call No. 541; nay on Roll Call No. 542; nay on Roll Call No. 543; yea on Roll Call No. 544; yea on Roll Call No. 545; nay on Roll Call No. 546; nay on Roll Call No. 547; yea on Roll Call No. 548; nay on Roll Call No. 549; nay on Roll Call No. 550; yea on Roll Call No. 551; nay on Roll Call No. 552; nay on Roll Call No. 553; yea on Roll Call No. 554; and nay on Roll Call No. 555.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DAVID P. JOYCE

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 1, 2019

Mr. JOYCE of Ohio. Madam Speaker, on Roll Call vote 548, I was in the Chamber but was unable to execute my vote. I would have voted "yea" on Roll Call No. 548.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BRENDA L. LAWRENCE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 1, 2019

Mrs. LAWRENCE. Madam Speaker, unfortunately, on September 27, 2019, I was not able to cast my votes during the vote series due to personal matters in Michigan. Had I been in attendance, I would have voted: "aye" on Roll Call No. 555: H. Res. 603—Raising a question of the privileges of the House; "yea" on Roll Call No. 554: H.R. 3722—the Joint Task Force to Combat Opioid Trafficking Act; and "yea" on Roll Call No. 553: S.J. Res. 54—A joint resolution relating to a national emergency declared by the President on February 15, 2019.

HONORING THE BRAVE MEN AND WOMEN OF THE SPRING FIRE DEPARTMENT

HON. DAN CRENSHAW

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 1, 2019

Mr. CRENSHAW. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the brave men and women of the Spring Fire Department, a public safety agency that has come a long way in its 66-year history, but never so much as in the past decade.

For the first few decades, local residents and businesses passed the hat, and volunteers manned the donated and frequently pre-owned, equipment.

As Spring has evolved from a rural railroad stop into a Houston suburb, the fire department has grown alongside the community. In 1997, Spring Fire began employing profes-

sional firefighters to supplement their volunteers during the daytime hours.

Meeting the expectations of a rapidly growing population is a challenge they meet every day. Six of Spring's nine fire stations were built this decade. Station 74 is the last of the new stations to open for service.

Every day, the men and women of the Spring Fire Department provide fire suppression, emergency medical response, and more to over 152,000 people in 62 square miles of northern Harris County.

From a fire department where volunteers heard the siren and rushed to a station to pick up a fire engine, Spring has evolved into a combination department that staffs all its nine stations 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Today, the department has a mix of full-time, part-time and volunteer firefighters to answer the calls. With a fleet of over two dozen pieces of fire and rescue apparatus, along with more than a dozen support vehicles, Spring firefighters respond to fires, medical emergencies, vehicle accidents, and highwater rescues.

Built to withstand strong hurricane-force winds, the new Station 74 is already home to an engine and a tanker. Designed with the future in mind, Station 74 will be able to house more fire equipment, an additional crew, and a District Chief in the years to come.

The new Spring Fire Station 74 is a testament to the commitment of the department, their command staff, and the board of Harris County Emergency Services District Number 7 to serve Spring today and in the future.

It is my honor to be part of the Spring Fire Station 74 Grand Opening Celebration on October 5. May God bless these crews putting their lives on the line for this community every day, and may God continue to bless Texas and the United States of America.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. VERONICA ESCOBAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 1, 2019

Ms. ESCOBAR. Madam Speaker, my votes were not recorded on September 27, 2019. I am not recorded because I had to attend to a family matter. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on Roll Call No. 553, "yea" on Roll Call No. 554, and "yea" on Roll Call No. 555.

CONGRATULATING PASTOR JIM GRAFF AND TAMARA GRAFF ON FAITH FAMILY CHURCH'S 30TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. MICHAEL CLOUD

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 1, 2019

Mr. CLOUD. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Pastor Jim and Tamara Graff for their over 30 years of serving Faith Family Church.

Faith Family Church began with humble origins as a home Bible Study. In 1989—after favor and growth from the Lord—Faith Family Church called Pastor Jim and Tamara Graff to